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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2535

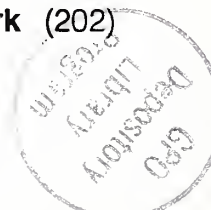
Dec. 6, 1991

USDA'S 1991 YEARBOOK FOCUSES ON ENVIRONMENT -- "Agriculture and the Environment," the 1991 Yearbook of Agriculture is off-press. "This yearbook focuses on environmental concerns facing agriculture, and examines what USDA is doing to address these concerns," says Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan**. The book was printed with soy-based ink on recycled paper. "The challenge facing world agriculture today," Madigan says, "is to provide food, fiber and industrial raw materials for billions of people -- without jeopardizing the future productivity of our natural resources." Media review copies are available from **Marci Hilt** (202) 720-6445. **Media ONLY**, please. **Contact: Deborah Smith** (202) 720-9173.

HILTY CONFIRMED -- **Charles R. Hilty** has been confirmed by the Senate as USDA assistant secretary of agriculture for administration. Hilty has been the associate deputy secretary at USDA since April. In his new position, Hilty will direct USDA's financial management, personnel, civil rights, computer, administrative law & general operational activities. Before coming to USDA, Hilty was minority staff director of the House Committee on Agriculture from 1983 to 1991. Hilty held news positions with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Bloomington Daily Pantagraph and the Bluffton (Ohio) News. **Contact: Roger Runnigen** (202) 720-4623.

EDITING GENES -- Tomorrow's gene-engineered food crops may garner government approval more quickly now that two USDA scientists have learned to "edit" marker genes out of crops. "We have to use marker genes to know if we've successfully given plant cells important new genes to improve traits like food flavor or the plant's resistance to insects," says geneticist **David W. Ow**. "But once we know this, the marker is a hindrance, like excess words in a sentence. By deleting the markers after they've done their job, we can cut the number of genes federal regulators must scrutinize to ensure a gene-engineered tomato or other food will be safe to eat." **Contact: David W. Ow** (510) 559-5900.

MAINE FREE OF PSEUDORABIES -- USDA has recognized Maine as the first state to be free of pseudorabies, a costly disease of swine & other livestock. The USDA action was based on a recent recommendation of the National Pseudorabies Control Board, a six-member body appointed by the livestock, animal health and pork industries. The board evaluates state programs and recommends actions to USDA. **Contact: Larry Mark** (202) 720-3977.



INDIANA-BASED COMPANY LICENSES USDA PATENT -- Mead-Johnson Nutritional Group of Evansville, Ind., a major manufacturer of infant formula, has been granted a license for a low-fat milk concentrate developed & patented by USDA scientists. The concentrate provides reconstituted milk with the texture of whole milk & the cholesterol content of skim milk. The milk concentrate was invented by **George N. Bookwalter & Steven A. Lyle** of USDA's National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, Peoria, Ill. An eight-ounce serving of milk made from the concentrate contains just four milligrams of cholesterol compared with whole milk, which contains 33 milligrams of cholesterol. **Contact: George Bookwalter** (309) 685-4011.

EXERCISE IMPORTANT EARLY IN LIFE -- Inactivity is one of the major causes of childhood obesity. Studies continue to show that overweight children & teenagers watch more TV & exercise less than those of normal weight. "Physical activity can help not only to keep a child's weight within acceptable limits, but it also can increase strength, coordination and self-confidence," says **Beth Reames**, extension nutritionist at Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. "And students who are fit also do better in school than those who are inactive." Reames has some guidelines to encourage physical activity for youngsters. **Contact: Beth Reames** (504) 388-4141.

BRISK WALKING several times a week along with extra calcium can help prevent osteoporosis, according to a year-long USDA study. A group of 18 women in their 50's & 60's walked at a pulse-raising pace for 45 minutes four times a week, while a second group of 18 maintained their sedentary lifestyles. Half of each group got an extra 800 milligrams of calcium daily. The walkers actually increased spine bone by an average of 0.5 percent during the year, while the sedentary women lost 7 percent, regardless of their calcium intake. **Contact: Miriam Nelson** (617) 556-3075.

TOMORROW'S COOKIES, MUFFINS & BREADS could be made from a crop that today feeds livestock & wildlife. Cattle, sheep & horses graze pastures of intermediate wheatgrass; rabbits & deer nibble on the plants' tender shoots. Tests now show people like the taste, texture & appearance of chocolate-chip oatmeal cookies, banana bread & other baked goods made exclusively with intermediate wheatgrass flour or with a blend that included whole-wheat flour. As a perennial, wheatgrass could prove a useful alternative crop for growers with hilly, erosion-prone land that can't withstand the wear of seeding & tilling annual crops such as wheats, oats & rye. **Contact: Robert Becker** (415) 559-5680.

<p><i>Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 720-6445 Fax: (202) 690-2165</i></p>
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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1800 -- On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, **Jim Henry** talks with USDA horticulturist, **Marc Cathey**, about decorating for the holidays and the traditions behind the Christmas tree, the mistletoe and other holiday greenery. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1282 -- Nuts for the holidays; the healthy holiday host; deck the halls; holiday credit billing troubles; the new and improved beef. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1791 -- USDA News Highlights; trade update; soviet food problems; conservation compliance; testing your well. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1449 -- Living christmas trees; poinsettia's legacy; winter pruning; forensic entomology; biodiversity -- taking inventory. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., Dec. 16, ag. income outlook; Tues., Dec. 17, crop/weather update; Wed., Dec. 18, cattle on feed; Thurs., Dec. 19, catfish, ag. outlook; Fri., Dec. 20, ag. trade update, world coffee situation; Mon., Dec. 23, livestock poultry update, Tue., Dec. 24, crop/weather update, Santa Claus weather. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on holiday buffet food safety and the 1991 outlook for Christmas trees.

ACTUALITIES -- Excerpts from Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan's** speech and news conference at the Agriculture Outlook Conference; Excerpts from U.S. Trade Ambassador **Carla Hills'** remarks at the Agriculture Outlook Conference; USDA meteorologist **Ray Motha** with domestic and international weather and crop update; USDA economist **Ralph Parlett** on 1992 food prices; USDA economist **Tom Tice** on feed; USDA economist **Bob Skinner** on cotton.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on the Yearbook of Agriculture; **Pat O'Leary** reports on U.S. high value farm exports, and **Lynn Wyvill** reports on supplies and prices of some popular holiday food and decorations.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:
Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST, **Saturdays** from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST, and **Mondays** from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST.

OFFMIKE

FOCUS ON FARMING...program produced by **Bill Walters** (WCUB, Manitowoc, Wisc.), recently featured a farmer who has installed fences that were solar powered. Bill says solar power provided a substantial savings in electricity costs. Two items Bill says are on farmers' minds are difficulty in getting part-time help (most want higher wages than the farmer can pay) and the escalating cost of health care. Promoters expect 80 exhibit booths & 10,000 participants at the Manitowoc County Expo fairgrounds for the WCUB Ag Show, scheduled for March 19.

LATIN AMERICA TOUR...**Wey Simpson** (KAQQ, Spokane, Wash.) & **Al Pell** (Ag Day, Indianapolis, Ind.) took the U.S. Feed Grains Council's Latin America Tour. They visited Brazil, Argentina & Mexico. Wey says all three countries are lowering trade barriers and moving toward a more open economy, increasing prospects for more exports and imports with the U.S. Wey will be covering the Spokane's Chamber of Commerce's Farm Forum & Ag Expo, Jan. 14-16 in Spokane.

Farm Broadcasters Letter

Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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NEW PLANS...announced by **Chuck & Cindy Zimmerman** (Southeast Agrinet, Ocala, Fla.), are to move this month to Jefferson City, Mo., to join the Brownfield Network, rather than joining Ag Net in Houston, Texas. Chuck will serve as Brownfield's general manager, and Cindy will serve as associate farm director covering the news.

PRODUCER CONCERNS...in the area served by **Gary Wergin** (KFEQ, St. Joseph, Mo.) include the state of the economy, how that will affect agriculture & wetlands regulations. Gary has been covering a wetlands case that began in 1986 that was just recently resolved. He's looking forward to the winter meeting season & a busy speaking schedule.

NEW TV SERVICE...AgNet, Houston, Texas, began broadcasting Dec. 2 on channel 10 of the K-1 satellite. Programming operates Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., EDT, for urban & rural America. Thanks to **Mike Miller** (AgNet) (713) 661-2745 for the info.

VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio & TV Division